

SPEEDILY WILL BE PUBLISHED,

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BIBLIOTHECA SEPTENTRIONALIS,

O R,

AN UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY,

CONTAINING EVERY THING RELATIVE TO

The Northern Nations,

FROM

The SOURCES of the DANUBE and RHINE,

TO

The EXTREMITIES of ICELAND and GREENLAND.

COMPREHENDING

Their Ancient Histories and Traditions, the Revolutions of their several Empires,
their different Sects in Religion and Politics, their Governments,
Laws, Customs, Manners, in Peace and War.

THEIR ARTS AND SCIENCES.

THEOLOGY,
MYTHOLOGY,
MAGIC,
PHYSICS,

MEDICINE,
MORALITY,
CHRONOLOGY,
GEOGRAPHY

ASTRONOMY,
RHETORIC,
AND
GRAMMAR.

THE LIVES AND REMARKABLE ACTIONS

OF THEIR

KINGS,
STATESMEN,
LEGISLATORS,
JUDGES,

WARRIORS,
HISTORIANS,
ORATORS, AND
POETS.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF, AND EXTRACTS FROM,

THEIR ANCIENT BARDS AND HISTORIANS:

FORMING

A COMPLETE BODY OF NORTHERN HISTORY,

FROM THE

MOST REMOTE ANTIQUITY, TO THE BEGINNING OF THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

By JOHN CALLANDER, of CRAIG-FORTH, ESQ;

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AN UNIVERSAL HISTORY

OF THE
UNIVERSE

IN FIVE VOLUMES

BY

JOHN HARRINGTON

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

THE FIRST VOLUME

OF THE

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THE FIRST VOLUME

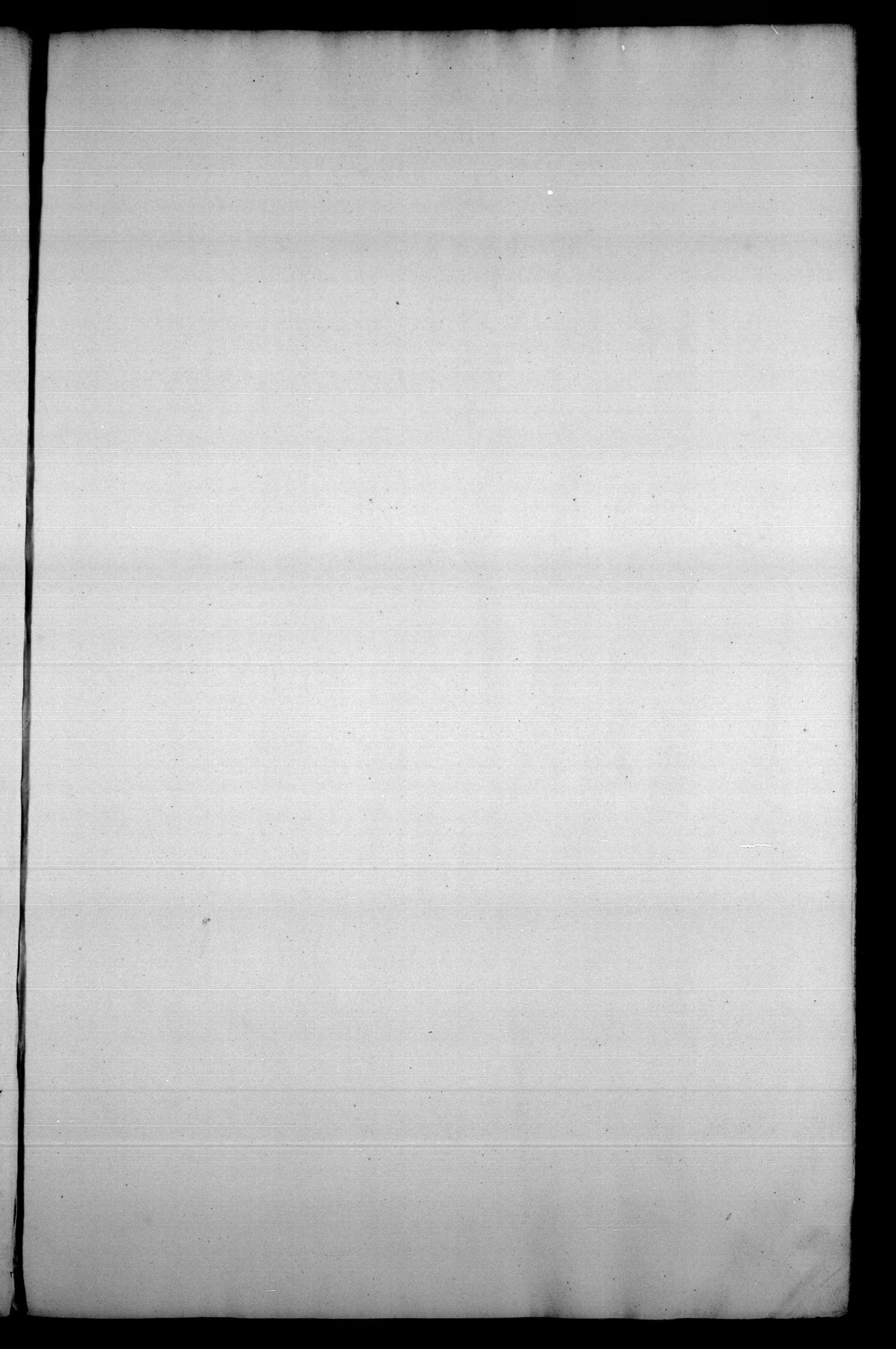
OF THE

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T O T H E R E A D E R

IT is the design of the following work to present to the candid investigator of antiquity whatever the Compiler's reading has furnished him with, relating to the persons, places, and things, which, in a long series of ages, have offered themselves, as most deserving a place in the temple of Memory, from the Northern Parts of Europe.

It has been thought, that such a compilation (for it can merit no higher designation) may be found often useful to those who, either for amusement or more rational ends, would thoroughly investigate the ancient language, manners, religion, legislation, and history of our Anglo-Saxon, Danish, German, Scots, and Irish ancestors.—But may it not serve yet higher and more noble purposes? May we not here trace the origin of many rites and ceremonies, the vestiges of which are still extant, in the customs of our own and the neighbouring nations? May we not here view, as in embryo, the first outlines of our present manners and laws? Nay, the Compiler thinks, that the very form of our present government, whence we derive so many public blessings, was first traced by those rude but fortunate hands, who explored the wild forests of Germany and Scandinavia. An ardent love of liberty and found sense, united in those ancient warriors, enabled them to lay the foundations of that civil polity to which we owe the permanency of a form of government in this island, which has been so long the wonder of those foreigners who have best understood its structure. Hence, it will not be thought an unprofitable labour to collect such fragments of ancient history as have escaped the hand of Time, while they acquaint us with what concerns us so nearly in the persons of our ancestors.

I am not ignorant that, in an age too frivolous to attempt any manly investigation, it will be asked, To what purpose assaffinate us with a large folio, which revives a heap of fables, false opinions, and dubious facts, which have long and justly been devoted to oblivion? Why take so much trouble to dissipate the gloom which envelopes the ancient state of nations? What have we to do with any transactions but those of our contemporaries? What pleasure can be found in the recital of barbarous manners, which have no connection with our own, and which we are sure will never again revive?

To such cavils, which are often heard, we shall reply in the words of a late writer, as eminent for the extent of his knowledge in the History of the North, as for the delicacy of his taste *: “The major part of mankind,” says he, “confined in their views, and averse to labour, would fain persuade themselves, that whatever they are ignorant of is useless, and that no addition can be made to the stock of knowledge already acquired. But this is a stock which diminishes whenever it ceases to increase. The same reason which prompts us to neglect the acquisition of new knowledge leads us to forget what we have before attained. The less the mind is accustomed to exercise its faculties, the less it compares objects, and the less it discovers the relation they bear to each other. Thus it loses that strength and accuracy of discernment which are its surest guardians against error. To think of confining our studies to what may be deemed mere necessary truths is to expose ourselves to the danger of shortly becoming ignorant of those truths themselves. A thirst after useful knowledge can never be too great, and is always a sure sign of the flourishing state of science. The more it prompts to new researches, the more it confirms and matures the preceding ones. We already see, but too plainly, the bad effects of this spirit of false economy, which, hurtful to itself, diminishes the present stock of knowledge, by imprudently refusing to extend it. By lopping off those branches which hasty judgments deem unprofitable, they weaken and impair the trunk itself. But the truth is, it would cost some pains to discover new facts, of a different kind from what we are used to; and therefore we willingly rid ourselves of that trouble, by ever confining ourselves to the old ones. Writers only show us what resembles our own manners; or if one, bolder than the others, presents us with a new scene, he is branded as an impostor, or at best a visionary. In vain hath Nature va-

* Mallet's Preface to North, Antiquities, Vol. 1.

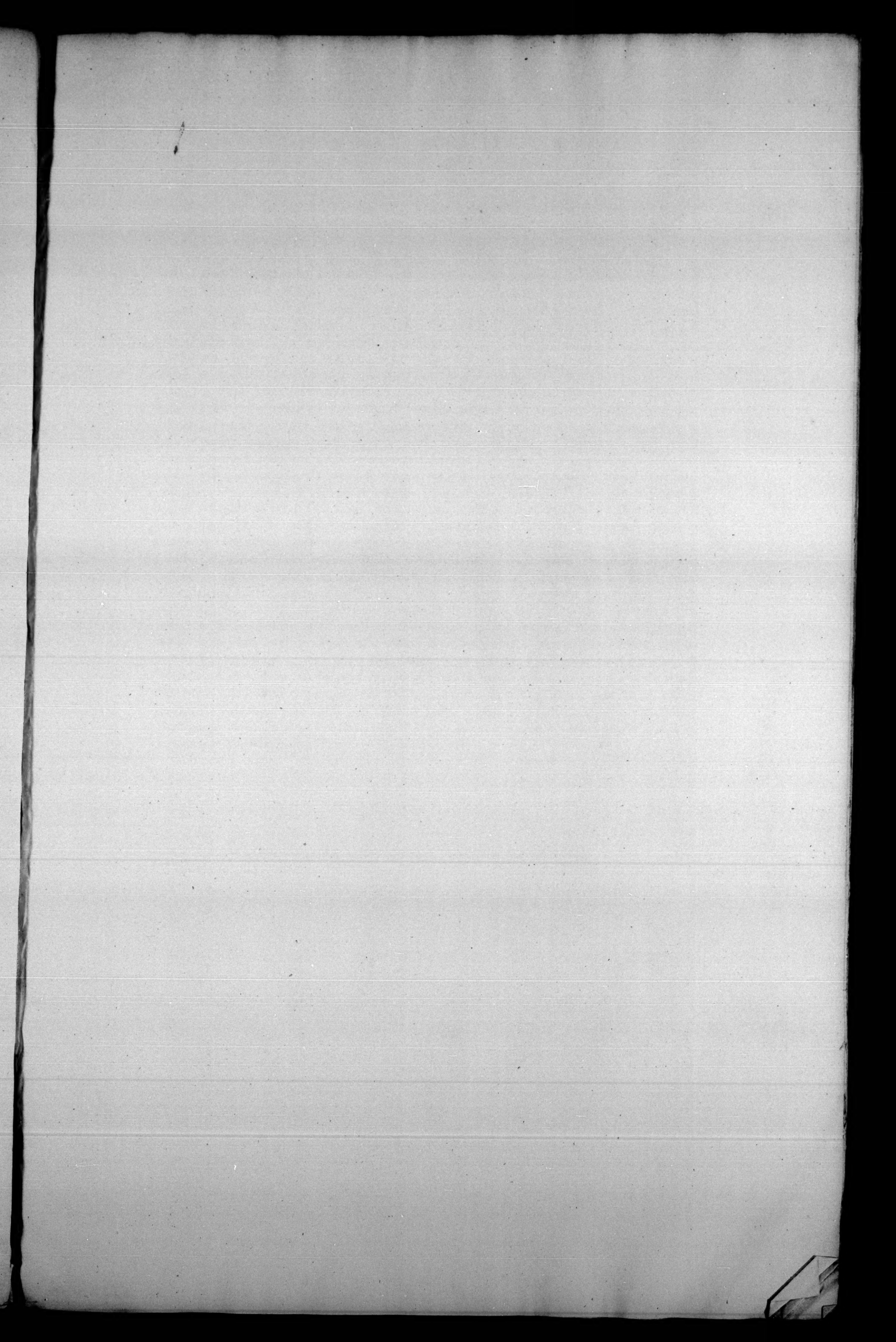
“ried her productions with such infinite diversity. Though a very small movement would procure us a new point of view, we have not, it seems, either leisure or courage to attempt it. Content to paint the manners of that contracted society in which we live, or perhaps of even but a small part of it, we boldly exhibit this as a complete portrait of the age, of the world, and of mankind.”

And yet at no time was the public more greedy after novelty than at the present. But where do men generally seek for it? In new combinations of ancient thoughts. They examine former thoughts and words—they turn their old stock of books over and over again, and thus resemble an architect, who should think of building a city by successively erecting different houses with the same materials. If we would seriously form new conclusions, and acquire new ideas, let us make new observations. In the moral and political world, as well as in the natural, there is no other way to arrive at truth. We must study the languages, the books, the manners, and the men of every age, and of every country, and draw from these the only true sources of the knowledge of mankind. This study, so important, so pleasing, and so interesting, is a mine as rich in real knowledge as it has been hitherto neglected. The bands of connection, which now unite the different nations of Europe, grow every day stronger and closer. We live in the bosom of one great republic, composed of the several European kingdoms, and therefore we ought not to despise any of the means which enable us either to investigate its origin, or more thoroughly to understand its fabric; neither can we properly judge of its present improved state, without looking back upon its rude beginnings, and, as far as the analogy of history gives us means, to trace the various and often silent steps, by which it hath emerged from its political chaos, into the present regular form in which it now subsists.

A review of the lives and actions of the men who were the founders of those states, or authors of the various revolutions that have, at different times, changed the system of government in the Northern Parts of our hemisphere, forms a great part of the history of the human mind, and often enables us to penetrate even the most secret springs of action. Luckily for us, the customs of our ancestors tended much to furnish us with materials for this purpose, though these sources of information have hitherto been little regarded. Animated with the most ardent desire of perpetuating their military fame to after ages, the Kings and great men of the North retained near their persons the most distinguished Bards of the age in which they lived, who, being eye-witnesses of their actions, were thereby enabled to transmit them with veracity to posterity. I call them *eye-witnesses*, in the most literal sense of the word; because they accompanied their prince wherever he went, fought by his side, and few of them have recorded any extraordinary exploit in which they were not actors themselves. Many proofs of this will occur in the course of this work. We may make the same observation with regard to their Historians, who recorded what passed in their own days, and, in their account of anterior transactions, always quote the writings of those whose veracity had stood the test of past ages unimpeached. How much more sure must their testimony prove than that of an idle monk, who, ever confined to his cell, and his mind clouded with the most melancholy superstition, was as unfit to judge of the reports he heard, as he was disabled, by a puerile credulity, to send them down, with any truth, to posterity. For the veracity of this assertion I dare well appeal to all who have ever looked into those contemptible legends they have left us. Yet it is as true as strange, that all our modern historians have chosen to follow these blind guides, utterly neglecting to consult those authors, in whose writings alone the true account of facts was to be found. Hence it is, that most of those histories are mere copies of each other, and written either for the emolument of the bookseller, or to prove to us, that the last writer had consulted Gildas, Bede, and John Fordun, with as much diligence and success as his predecessors in the trade of *book-making* had done before him.

Reflections of this kind naturally arose in the mind of the Compiler of the following Dictionary, from the continual disappointments he met with, while endeavouring to trace the ancient history, customs, and manners of the Northern Nations, from the monks, who were the only writers of the middle ages, and that herd of servile copiers, who have sent down their falsehoods ever since, from one generation of readers to another. Fortunately, a sight of some of the Scandinavian historians and poets in some measure opened his eyes, and directed him to the true sources of information. The further he advanced in this tract of study, the more the light grew upon him; nor could he resist what he hopes may be called a laudable desire, of communicating such discoveries as he has made to those who will deign to consult this book. He is fully sensible, that the task he has undertaken is much too great for a writer now in the decline of life, whose bad health often obliges him to lay aside his pen, and who does write in a country where very few of the books he most wished to see are to be found; so that this work has been hitherto carried on by intervals, amidst many interruptions, occasioned by his being often deprived of those books he wished most to consult, some of which were churlishly denied him by those who would be thought patrons of literature in North Britain.

He



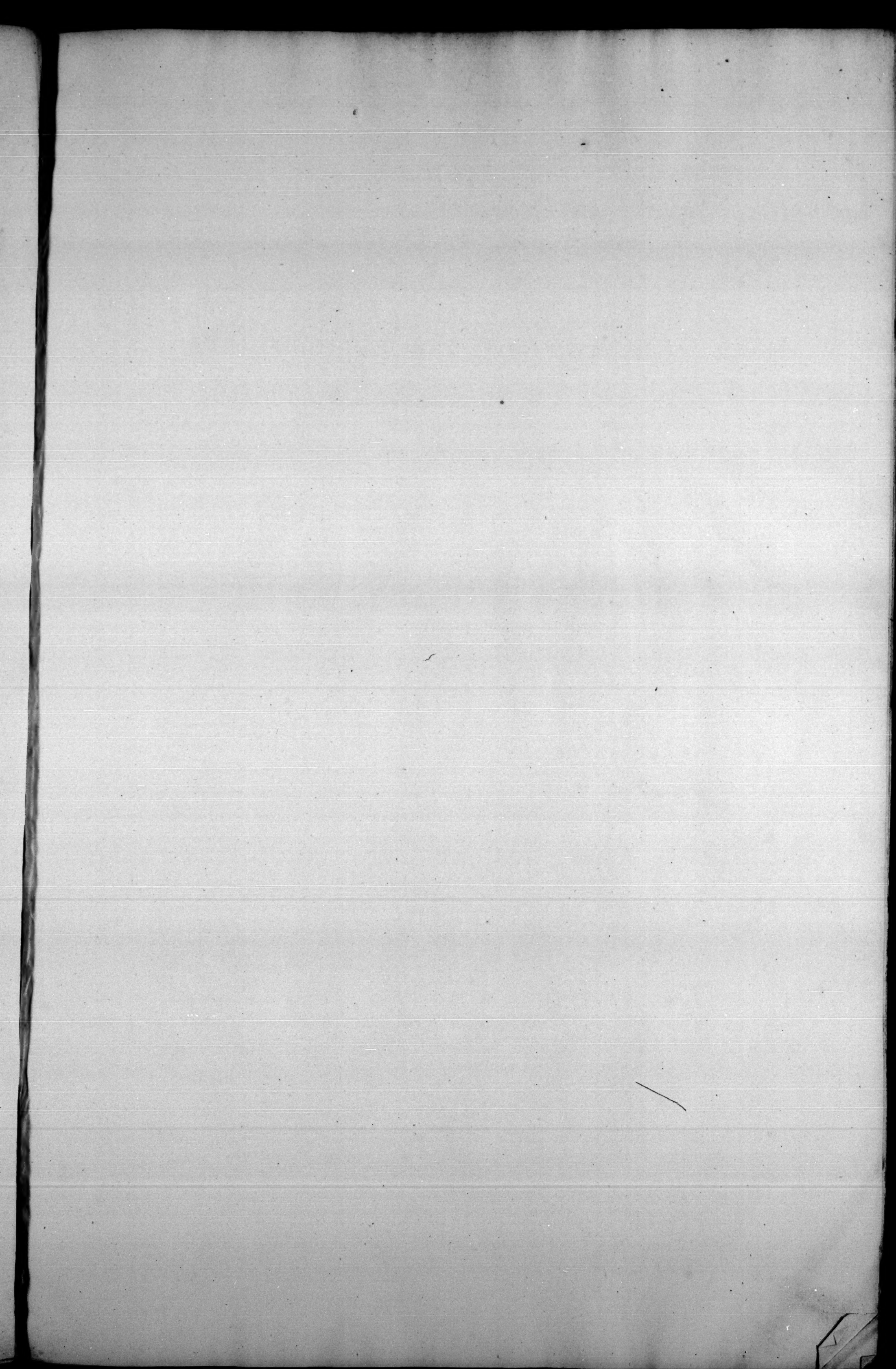
He hopes the Public will approve of the method he has taken, of throwing his work into the form of a Dictionary, for which he has the well-known examples of Herbelot and Bayle to plead, whose tract he means, though with infirm and halting steps, to follow.

The universal approbation bestowed on the writers just named proves how acceptable to the Public their method of arranging their several works has proved; as, indeed, no form of composing whatever affords so much ease to the reader in consulting a book. In imitation of them, too, the Compiler has sometimes indulged himself in disquisition, when the importance of the subject seemed to call for it; or in making extracts from the authentic histories of the North, where these enter into minute relations of manners and laws, as the Reader will find under these several articles. Nay, he has thought it no unpleasant part of his duty, as an Historian, to give extracts from and translations of many ancient poems, which tend to make us more intimately acquainted with the religious, physical, moral, geographical, and nautical knowledge of our Celtic and Teutonic ancestors.

Without the most distant intention of detracting from the great names of Mess. Bayle and Herbelot, may the Compiler be permitted just to remark, that it seems more worthy the attention of a mind, attached to the pursuit of real science, to be made acquainted with the origin of those laws, customs, and manners, which, even at this day, materially influence our whole system of government and jurisprudence, than to be informed of the theological reveries of some obscure pedant in Germany, whose name, had not Bayle given it a place in his Dictionary, would never have been heard of beyond the narrow limits of his school. To this we may add, that surely we, in these western parts of the globe, are more interested in what was said and done by our immediate ancestors, than we can possibly be to hear of the disputes which formerly occupied two Imams on a contraverted passage of that strange rhapsody called the Khoran, or to be told how many beauties composed the Haram of a voluptuous Calif at Bagdat or Damascus, those seats of oriental superstition and despotism.

The Compiler of this work flatters himself that he has chosen a nobler field of investigation; but as, in the course of it, he must often walk over untrodden ground, where devious paths may perplex his wandering steps, he thinks himself warranted to call on such as have made ancient history and manners (particularly those of the North) their study, that they may kindly help him in the prosecution of this difficult undertaking, by communicating whatever lights their reading may have furnished them with: These will be most thankfully received, and (if not forbid) the names of such as are so indulgent as to assist the weakness of the Compiler will be given to the Public. To procure those necessary helps was one of the chief reasons which determined the writer to communicate his design at present to the Public; and he is willing to suppose that those who are best qualified to judge of the many difficulties which attend researches of this sort will look with a favourable eye on the attempt, however poorly executed, to promote the interest of science.—*Ceteros non moror.*

The Literary Benefactions solicited by the Compiler, if given to the Printer, will be safely conveyed to the Author of the NORTHERN DICTIONARY.



S P E C I M E N

OF THE

BIBLIOTHECA SEPTENTRIONALIS.

A.

ARIUS.

ARIUS, surnamed FRODE, i. e. *the Wise*, and *Polyhistor*, was born in Iceland, Anno Christi 1068. Torfæus⁽¹⁾ has given us his genealogy, by which we learn, that he was descended from one of the most illustrious families of that island, which, at that time, was the seat of Northern Literature, while the rest of Europe was involved in the deepest gloom of ignorance and barbarity. His name in the Icelandic is *Ara*, and we may judge of the esteem in which he was held for his genius and knowledge by the honourable designation of *Frode*, or *the Wise*, by which we always find him mentioned. When he was yet but seven years old, he was put under the tuition of Hall, son of Thorar, a venerable old man, who had lived in the court of Olaf the Saint, King of Norway, and was perfectly acquainted with every transaction of that remarkable æra⁽²⁾. With this tutor Ara lived till he was fifteen years old, and, during that time, contracted an intimate friendship with Teit, the son of Bishop Illeif⁽³⁾, who related to Ara many things which the latter afterwards inserted in his histories. To these he added the informations he got from Thuris, the daughter of Snorro Godi, a very learned woman⁽⁴⁾. His lives of the kings of Norway he wrote from the accounts given him by Oddo, who had them from Thorger, a very old man. The death of Ara is fixed by Torfæus⁽⁵⁾ to the year 1148, with whom Olaus Wormius⁽⁶⁾ also agrees.

The works of this historian, yet remaining, are his *Islen- dinga Bok*, or Account of Iceland, which was printed at Schalholt in Iceland, anno 1688, by the care of Theodore Thorlak, Bishop of Schalholt. This treatise Ara seems to have begun about the year 1122, and inscribed it to the two Bishops of Holar and Schalholt; but, after it had undergone their corrections, and those of the famous Sæmund⁽⁷⁾ Poly- histor, he gave a second edition of it in the year 1134.

We have also his *Kristindom's Saga*, or the Ecclesiastical History of Iceland, printed at Schalholt, anno 1688. In these two books he treats of the first peopling of Iceland, the nature of their government and laws, with an historical account of their judges, and some anecdotes of their lives and actions, down to his own time. He has given a particular account of the first introduction of Christianity into his native country in his *Kristindom's Saga*, to which he has joined the most material events that happened in Norway (whence Christianity was first brought to Iceland), during the period he treats of⁽⁸⁾.

His style, like that of all the most authentic writers of Iceland, is plain and concise; less solicitous about ornament than zealous to write nothing but truth, he tells, with the utmost simplicity, the sources whence he drew the materials for his history, that his readers may judge for themselves what degree of credit is due to it.

Snorro⁽⁹⁾ has left us a particular account of Ara Frode, and the documents on which his history is founded, in the following words: "Ara ille sapiens, sacrorum antistes, Thor- gilli Gellison filius, primus omnium in hoc regno, tam prisca, quam recentiora historiarum monumenta, Norwegi- co idiomate literis consignavit⁽¹⁰⁾. Exponit autem primo, qualis olim fuerat Islandiæ cultus, judiciorumque ordo. Deinde legiferorum (*Lagmanns*) recenset catalogum, quanto quisque tempore, muneri suo præfuerat. Anno- rum calculum a prima Islandiæ occupatione, usque ad re- ceptum in illa terra Christianismum instituit, qua serie porro ad sua usque tempora progreditur—Ac mihi sane universa quæ in medium adduxerat fide dignissima cen- sentur." The reasons adduced by Snorro for giving en- tire credit to Ara, are, that, being born the year after King Harald's death, the most remarkable events of the preceding age he had from eye-witnesses. Such was Oddo, nephew of Hall, who related to Ara what he learned from Thorger, who lived at the time that Earl Haco, surnamed *the Rich*, died⁽¹¹⁾. Thorger lived on that spot on which afterwards the city of Drontheim was built by King Olaf Trygvason. Hall, uncle to Oddo, lived ninety-four years, and, as he told himself, was three years old when he was baptised by the priest Thangbrand, four years prior to the public settlement of Christianity in Iceland. Ara was twelve years old at the death of Bishop Illeif, which happened just eighty years after that of King Olaf Trygvason. Teit, the son of Bishop Illeif, grew up under Hall, at Hockadal, where he continued to live after Hall died; and here it was he communicated his knowledge of past transactions to our Ara, who then lived with him.

We judged it necessary to say so much of the channels of information, which Ara had access to, as it accounts for the universal credit given to him, as a faithful historian, by those who, living near his own time, were best able to judge of the truth of his narration; for Snorro, from whom we have formed most of this article, was murdered, while he was judge of Iceland, in the year 1241⁽¹²⁾. Olaus Wormius⁽¹³⁾ attributes to our Ara the History of the ancient Kings of Nor- way, called *Romunga Saga*. Nor is this conjecture destitute of probability, as we know that he did leave such a history, though perhaps it is now lost. Biorn de Scardza will have it, that Ara Frode was the first compiler of the *Flatayan An- nals*, so often cited by the Northern historians, as Sæmund, also surnamed *Frode*, was of these of Odenfee⁽¹⁴⁾. It is not improbable he might have gathered together many of the pieces of that collection, though it is certain his regard to truth would not permit him to give equal credit to them all. We shall have occasion to say more on this subject in a sub- sequent article.

ARIUS.

(1) Torfæi Hist. Norweg. vol. II. p. 144. (2) Vid. Sibbern Bibl. Dan. p. 75. (3) Vid. art. *Teit* and *Illeif*, infra. (4) Bartolin. Ant. p. 199. Sibbern, Bibl. Dan. p. 75. (5) Sev. Reg. Dan. p. 43. (6) Præfat. in Chron. Snorr. Sturlason. (7) Vid. art. *Sæ- mund*, infra. (8) Sibbern Bibl. Dan. p. 74. (9) Snorro Sturl. Præfat. p. 3. (10) The word translated *Norway idiom* here, is in the original *Norronu*, by which Snorro understands the old Icelandic, which was spoken over all Scandinavia in his days and long after. (11) Vid. art. *Haco*, infra. (12) Vid. art. *Snorro*, infra. (13) Præfat. ad Chron. Snorr. Sturl. (14) Vid. infra *Flatayan Annals*, in voce *Flatay*.

B.

BRENNEGA. BRENNEGA, the name of a small island lying in the mouth of the river Gautelfa, which divides Sweden from Denmark and Norway. It has been rendered famous by the meeting held here by Eyric King of Denmark, Yng of

Sweden, and Magnus Barefoot of Norway, in the eleventh century (1), when they dined together on one stone, each sitting in his own kingdom (2).

(1) Torfæi Ser. Reg. Dan. lib. 1. (2) Torfæi Hist. Norweg. lib. 2. cap. 1.

C.

CUCHULLIN.

CUCHULLIN, one of the Caledonian heroes celebrated by Ossian in those immortal poems which the ingenious Mr Macpherson happily rescued from the oblivion just ready to swallow them. Cuchullin was the son of Semo, and grandson of Caithbat a druid, celebrated in tradition for his wisdom and valour. While very young, he married Bragela, daughter of Sorglan. He was lord of the isle of Sky, or Dunfaich, as it is called by Ossian, which signifies the *isle of mist* (1). From his native isle, Cuchullin passed over to Ireland, and lived for some time with Connal, grandson of Congal, King of Ulster. Here his wisdom and valour quickly gained him so great a reputation, that, in the minority of Cormac, supreme monarch of Ireland, he was chosen his guardian, and commanded the Irish forces in the war against Swaran, son of Staruo, King of Lochlyn or Scandinavia, who had invaded Ulster (2). In the first battle, the Irish were defeated, but Cuchullin, having taken the precaution, on the first notice of Swaran's invasion, to send for assistance to Fingal, Prince of the western Caledonians, he hastened to his assistance, and, having landed his army the day in which Cuchullin was defeated, in a second battle he conquered Swaran, took him prisoner, and obliged him to swear never again to invade Ireland. This expedition of Fingal is recorded by his son Ossian the poet, who accompanied his father into Ireland, with a strength of language, justness and dignity of sentiment, and harmony of numbers, very seldom equalled, and never surpassed by any writer, while he preserves a simplicity of narrative, abundantly sufficient to prove that there is no fiction, beyond the common embellishments of poetry, in the history (3). It is truly amazing to see that there are yet any, who pretend to the name of scholars, who can resist the proofs, both internal and external, which put the authenticity of those admirable pieces beyond a doubt. But, though the ingenious translator of Ossian, and (4) the elegant Dr Blair, have brought the clearest evidence of the antiquity justly assigned to them by Mr Macpherson, yet there are still some *scioli*, as devoid of all true knowledge of antiquity, as they are of taste and feeling for poetry, who, unsupported by any proof except their own assertions, have pronounced these pieces a late production, and, with mistaken benevolence, have ascribed them to the gentleman who translated them; shewing at once their own ignorance, while they attribute to him histories that carry every evidence of the times in which they were composed, and ascribe to Mr Macpherson praises which he has generously disclaimed. But, while those cavillers continue to involve themselves in clouds of their own forming, we shall continue, in this work, to quote the poems of Ossian as the genuine remains of Celtic antiquity; happy, that, in the works of this bard, we shall find many passages which greatly illustrate the history and manners of our Caledonian and Scandinavian ancestors, deduced from purer sources than the fables of ignorant and bigotted monks. If we arrive at that part of our work in which the venerable name of Ossian naturally will offer itself to our view (5), we hope, from the lights afforded us by the writers we have mentioned, to set this assertion in so clear a point of light, as for ever to put an end to a dispute which could never have originated but from the grossest partiality, and the most profound ignorance of ancient customs, history, and manners.

But to return—It appears, both from tradition and the poems of Ossian, that Cuchullin, having repelled the invaders from Scandinavia, continued to govern the affairs of Ireland, and, after a series of great actions, he was killed by an arrow, as Ossian informs us (6), somewhere in Connaught. But he expires like a hero: "Carril, said the

"King, the strength of Cuchullin fails—my days are
"with the years that are past, and no morning of mine
"shall arise—they shall seek me at Temora, but I shall not
"be found—but my name is renowned! my fame in the
"song of the bards. The youth will say in secret, O let
"me die as Cuchullin died—renown clothed him like a
"robe," &c. We learn too, that he left a young son by his spouse Bragela in the isle of Sky, where they yet shew the remains of Cuchullin's palace, and the stone to which he bound his faithful dog Luath, who (according to ancient custom) was killed and buried near his master (7); but the stone retains the name of Luath to this day.

Cuchullin fell in the twenty-seventh year of his age, leaving a great name behind him. He was so remarkable for bodily strength (a quality as highly as deservedly valued in those days) that it is yet a proverbial saying, "As strong as Cuchullin." It would appear, from Cuchullin's sending for aid over to Fingal in Scotland against so small a force as that which we may suppose Swaran brought with him into Ireland, that the country was, at this time, but thinly peopled. Indeed, many hints scattered through the works of Ossian render it more than probable that this was the case. This is one proof, among many, of the absurdity of the Milesian fables, and those more than equivocal records, which nobody could ever see, though they are often cited by those who assert (8), that Ireland was fully peopled many centuries before the Christian era. But the antiquaries of the soundest judgment are now agreed in opinion, that, like other countries, Ireland has been peopled from the nearest land, that is, from the western coasts of Caledonia. Surely this is far more probable than the fabulous history which brings the first settlers of Ireland from Spain, while, many ages after, they had nothing better than currachs to transport them from one island to another (9). That they are a colony from Caledonia is put beyond a doubt, not only by the vicinity of situation, but by the identity of language, manners, and customs, which united the two nations in the time of Ossian, and plainly proves, that the Irish were a colony from Caledonia, and of no early date; for the ties of consanguinity were not yet erased from the memory of these two nations, as Ossian fully informs us.

Cuchullin must have been renowned for his wisdom, for he was but twenty-three years of age when he was chosen guardian of young Cormac, and he vigorously defended this prince, till (10) Torlath, son of Cantela, set up for himself in Connaught, and advanced towards Temora to dethrone Cormac. Cuchullin marching against him, the two armies met at the lake of Lego. Torlath fell by the hand of Cuchullin, but he himself was mortally wounded, pursuing the enemy too eagerly, and thus died, like another Wolfe, in the bosom of victory.

The good fortune of Cormac fell with Cuchullin; he was murdered soon after (11), and anarchy took place (12).

We have only to add here, that Cuchullin's son was called Conloch, who became afterwards very famous for his exploits in Ireland. He was so remarkable for his dexterity in throwing the javelin, that, when a good marksman is described, it has passed into a proverb in the north of Scotland, "He is unerring as the arm of Conloch (13)."

The isle of Sky or Dunfaich retains to this day many proofs of the veracity of Ossian, as well as the high esteem in which Cuchullin was held by his subjects, the inhabitants of that island. Thus Pennant (14) tells us, that the highest hill in that island is still called *Quillin*, evidently a contraction of the name of *Cuchullin*. The same author elsewhere informs us (15), that, in another part of the island, he found a fountain called *the well of Cuchullin*.

(1) The reason of this appellation will be found in the article *Dunfaich*. (2) Vid. infra *Lochlyn*. (3) Adde art. *Ossian*, infra. (4) Critical Dissertation on Ossian. (5) In art. *Ossian*. (6) Death of Cuchullin. (7) Ossian, ubi sup. vide infra art. *Funeral*. (8) Vide O'Flaherty, Keating, and lately another Milesian called O'Halloran. His book is printed London 1772, 4to. (9) Vid. art. *Ireland*, and Macpherson in his notes on Ossian, *passim*. (10) Vid. Macpherson's notes on Ossian, vol. II. p. 143. (11) Vid. art. *Cairbre*. (12) Macpherson, ubi supra. (13) Macpherson on Ossian, p. 152. (14) Voyage to the Hebr. p. 287. (15) Ibid. p. 291.

F.

FLATEY.

FLATEY, an island adjoining to the western side of Iceland, which has acquired a name from the fortuitous circumstance that here was discovered the celebrated manuscript so often cited by the writers of the North under the title of the *Flateyan annals*.

The ancient Icelandic writers used different titles for their works, but they were always simple, and descriptive of their intentions in writing, far removed from that fulsome bombast we meet with in the pompous title-pages of the eastern poets and historians. These were generally *Saga* and *Sagur*, a life or a history, and when these were written in verse (as they often were), they got the name of *Rimur* or *Rima*, i. e. poems or rhymes. Sometimes we find them inscribed *Thaffr*, facts or transactions; at other times simply *Bok*, a book. Annals they called *Annalar* or *Annall*, dreams *Draumr*, and a prophecy they called *Spaa*. Hence the Edda is called *Volupsa*, because it contains the mythology of the present, and a prophecy concerning the future state of the world (1). To return from this digression—The *Codex Flateyensis* is a very large volume, wrote on vellum, and with great care preserved in the public library at Upsal. The celebrated Torfæus often quotes this ancient MS. in his great History of Norway, and elsewhere. It would appear, that the collector was less solicitous to gather nothing but the genuine monuments of antiquity, than to enlarge the volume, in which he has included every ancient relation he met with. Amongst other pieces of less value, it contains, The lives of Olaf Trygvasonar, and Olaf the faint, Kings of Norway; Norwegian antiquities; account of the battle of Sticklestad, in which Olaf the faint was killed (2); description of Vinland, being that part of North America discovered by the ancient Icelanders (3); poem on Jon, son of Lopt, and nephew of Sæmund; a history of the Orkney islands, frequently cited by Torfæus in the history he has given us of the Orkneys.

There are a vast many Icelandic MSS. besides these in the Flateyan volume, which are regarded as authentic history, though the names of the authors have not reached us. Such are the Eirbyggian, Floan, Isfiord, Laxdal, Liofvat, and Vatzdale histories. Many of these were rescued from oblivion, in the beginning of this century, by the two worthy Bishops of Iceland, Brynolf son of Sueno, and Thorlack of Holen, who gathered a vast number of these MSS. together, and afterwards had them neatly copied at a very great expence. Frederic III. had a great part of these brought from Iceland to Stockholm, and deposited in the royal library, whence they were afterwards sent to Torfæus, to assist him in composing his great History of Norway. After a careful perusal of these ancient monuments, the learned historiographer made up a fuller catalogue of them than had been exhibited either by Stephanus (4) or Bartolinus (5); and our readers will find it in his series of the Kings of Denmark (6), where he also mentions a number of ancient books, the names of which only remain.

The old Icelandic writings are divided by Torfæus into four classes, according to their subjects, and the degree of credit due to their authenticity. In the first of these, he has placed the mythologists, who have explained the theology, cosmogony, and religious rites of the ancients. Though in those we find no series of historical facts, yet many events of the first ages are occasionally mentioned. Such are the

Edda, the Havamal of Odin (7), the life of William called Sodi, and others of the same kind (8).

In the second class, he has placed the writers of romance; for the ancient Icelanders often composed books of this kind, though I cannot find that they were either so voluminous as Cyrus and Cleopatra, which formed the amusement of the last century, or so very sentimental as the *Sentimental Journeys* and *Sentimental Histories* which compose the libraries of our modern Grandsons and Clarissas. Of this sort we find *Bardar Saga Snæfells*, the history of a mountain genius or demigod (9); *Kroka Reffs Saga*, the life of Reff the Cunning; *Bua Sago*, and others of that sort. Some of these are so idle as not to be worth naming; such as *Sueins rimur Mucks Sonar*, *Alagus Jarls Saga*, *Nikolafs Saga Leikara*, the life of Nicholas the gamester, and many others (10). Among those, we find the life of Hamlet, *Ambda Saga*, which, whether it be the same with the account we find of that hero in Saxo Grammaticus or not, I cannot say.

In the third class, Torfæus places those writers whose works are indeed founded on truth, but much interpolated with fiction, which the authors have inserted by way of ornament, and thus rendered it difficult to discern the one from the other; such are *Thorsteins Saga*, *Vikings Sonar* (11), *Orvarods Saga*, *Ragnars Saga Lodbrokar*, life of King Ragner, history of Gotric and Hrolf, Princes of Welter Gothia, published with a Swedish version, and Latin notes, by the learned Olaus Verelius, professor of the ancient Gothic languages at Upsal (12), *Hofa oc Herrauds Saga*, the lives of Bofa and Heraud (13), and many others.

We find another set of these authors, in whose books it is no difficult matter to distinguish truth from fiction; such are many passages even in Saxo Grammaticus. In this class Torfæus has placed *Hrolfs Kraka Saga*, the life of Hrolf Kraka (14), that of Olaf Trygvasonar, and Olaf called the faint. These two last make part of the famous Flateyan MS.

The fourth class of the old Icelandic writers is formed of those whose histories are acknowledged by every body to be authentic, being wrote by men who were either eye-witnesses themselves of the events they record, or found the materials of their accounts in the relations and writings of those who had gone before them. Such are Sæmund and Ara Frode, Hauk son of Erlend, Snorro Sturlason, and others (15).

The works of those men contain the internal history of Scandinavia and Iceland, and also (if I may be permitted to use the term) the external history of our ancestors, that is, their migrations and expeditions both by sea and land, their invasions of Russia, France, the southern coasts of the Baltic, Great Britain, and Ireland.

Here we find the only genuine accounts of those actions of theirs which have been so falsely represented by the monks of the middle ages, and by the later writers, who, either from want of information, or from laziness, have servilely copied from each other the absurd fictions of Hector Boece, Buchanan, Fordun, Geoffry of Monmouth, and others of the same stamp. We hope, in the course of this work, to be able, from the Scandinavian writers themselves, to correct those errors, and to present to our readers many periods of our ancient history pure and immaculate.

(1) Vid. infra art. *Edda*, *Volupsa*, *Future state*. (2) Vid. Torf. *Greenland Ant.* p. 151. (3) Vid. Torf. *Præfat.* Vinland, lit. 6. infra the article *Vinland*. (4) In not. ad Sax. *Grammat.* p. 16. (5) Ad fin. *Ant. Dan.* (6) Lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 2. (7) Vid. infra *Havamal*. (8) Sibb. *Bibl. Dan.* p. 81. (9) Torf. ubi supra. (10) Sibb. ubi supra, p. 82. (11) Published, with a commentary, by Reenhelm. Vid. Torf. p. 30—34. (12) In 1664, 8vo, vid. Sæffer *Suecia literata*, p. 197. (13) Printed cum not. Olai Verelii, Upsal, 1666, 8vo. (14) Published by Torfæus in Latin, Hafn. 1706, 8vo. (15) Vid. Torfæus and Sibbern, ubi supra, and the articles of *Sæmund Hauk*, and others, infra.

G.

GREENLAND.

GREENLAND, the name given to that part of North America first discovered by Eric Raude, or the Red, in a voyage he made from Iceland, anno 982. Thus it appears, that the Icelanders were the first discoverers of North America, many ages before Columbus was born, and much about a century after their own island was peopled by the Norwegians (1). Nor was this discovery very difficult, as the most eastern coast of Greenland does not lie above forty Danish miles west from Iceland (2).

Eric staid all winter on this coast, and returning to Ice-

land in 983, spoke much in praise of the country, which, from its verdure, he called *Greenland*, and thus persuaded many of his countrymen to go over there and settle. Eric's son, called Lief, being instructed in the truths of Christianity by Olaf, the first Christian King of Norway, brought a priest from Norway, who instructed and baptised the inhabitants; and they increased so much, that the west Bygd or district contained four parishes and an hundred villages, which continued to flourish as long as the intercourse be-

(1) Vid. Torf. *Hift. Norweg.* vol. II. lib. 3. cap. 5. (2) Vid. Egede's account of Greenland.

G.

GREENLAND. twist them and Norway lasted, that is, till the year 1406, when the last bishop went over from Norway to Greenland.

This is the account given by the Icelandic historians, who add, that Eric and his people were not the first inhabitants; for, soon after their arrival there, they met with the *indigene* dwelling on the western coast, descended from the Americans, as they perfectly resemble those to the north of Hudson's bay.

It would appear, that the Danes and Swedes were too busy at home, during the translation of government by Queen Margaret, and the subsequent bloody wars between them, to think of this distant colony. Add to this, that the east coast, which at that time was accessible on all sides, is now so entirely shut up by ice that there is no approaching it, as all the later navigators assure us, though the east side, forming one coast of Davis's streights, remains open, and the Danish colony subsists there to this day. But, since the year 1400, it appears, that the western colony has been totally destroyed; and we are told, that, about that time, they were attacked by a wild nation, called *Skrællings* (which seem to be the native Americans), who entirely destroyed the Christians; so that, when the inhabitants of the east coast came to assist their brethren, they found the whole district desolate, the houses and churches burnt down, and the cattle straying wild in the fields. Hans Egede (1) assures us, that he has himself seen the ruins of many stone buildings on the east coast, now entirely forsaken; and the modern natives of West Greenland could only tell him, that these ruined buildings were formerly inhabited by a nation quite different from theirs, on whom their ancestors made war, and utterly destroyed them all. Be this as it may, it is certain, that now 300 years are elapsed since the eastern coast has been visited, or thought to be inhabited, as the immense quantities of ice driven from Spitzbergen and other coasts to the northward, adhering closely to the eastern shores of Greenland, render it totally inaccessible. Hence we may read as a fable the story of Amand, Bishop of Scalholt in Iceland, who, about the year 1530, returning from Norway, and being in a storm driven on the eastern coast, and finding themselves off Herjolms (in lat. 64. N.) came so near the shore, that they could see the inhabitants driving their flocks in the meadows. Biorn of Skardza (who wrote his history about the beginning of this century), mentions a captain in the service of the Hamburg merchants, who once landing on this coast, found some houses and inhabitants (2). Hans Egede (3) mentions several other stories of inhabitants still existing on the eastern coast, but all of them destitute of proper authority. It appears, therefore, most probable, that the inhabitants of the east, as well as those of the western coast, were all destroyed by the barbarous *Skrællings*, the original Greenlanders, some time during the fifteenth century. It is certain, that Mogens Heinson, who visited this coast by order of Frederic II. King of Denmark, Martin Forbisher, our British navigator, and Godtke Lindenow, who made this voyage by order of Christian IV. found none but savage inhabitants, several of whom they brought away with them. All these unsuccessful attempts occasioned this expedition to be quite laid aside till the year 1721, when the Greenland Company of Bergen resolved to plant a colony on the west coast, which they accordingly did, and Hans Egede went over with them as their pastor, and remained there fifteen years. This colony settled on a bay in lat. 64. N. and Egede assures us he found several places that had formerly been inhabited by the ancient Christians on the west coast; that he also examined the eastern coast, but found it quite barred up with ice, so that a ship sent thither 1724 could not get near it, but was obliged to return. Nor is it practicable to cross the land from west to east, on account of immense ridges of mountains always covered with snow and ice.

Greenland, according to Egede's account, extends from 59 deg. 50 min. to Spitzbergen, lying betwixt 78 and 80 degrees. The best part of this country lies between 60 and 65 degrees, but further towards the north the cold is intolerable, and the country produces neither grass nor trees, though it is inhabited as far as the bay of Disco in 69 degrees. It is very probable, that, at the bottom of Davis's streights, it is joined to America on the N. W. and the savages of Disco bay affirm, that, going north from thence, they found the strait so narrow, that they could speak to the people on the other side of the ice, who understood their language. Egede also observes, that the farther we advance into Davis's streights the land becomes lower, con-

trary to what happens on the coasts of the ocean, which are always bold and lofty; whence he concludes, that, at the farthest bottom of the streights, Greenland is joined to North America.

We have several accounts of Greenland by the northern writers. Claudius Lyschander wrote in verse *Gronlandste Kronike* paa Danke Rym (4). Arngnim Jonas wrote an account of this country in Latin, which was not printed, but Einar Eiofson translated it into the Icelandic, and this version was printed at Scalholt (5), under the title of *Gronlands Saga* (6). La Peyrere, famous for his system of the *Præ-Adamites*, wrote an account of this country, as he received it from a Danish gentleman, and it is published in the *Recueil de voyages au Nord* (7). Torfæus, in his *Grœnlandia Antiqua* (8), has given us the best account of the ancient history of Greenland. In this collection, too, we have an account of Spitzbergen and Greenland by Frederic Martens of Hamburg, drawn up in 1671; but Torfæus found so many errors in this work that he even doubts if either Martens or Blefkenius ever saw the country. Other modern accounts of Greenland are enumerated by Sibbern (9). Torfæus (10) cites an ancient Icelandic book, called *Grœnlendinga Thattr, Grœnlandensum hi-floria*, whence, and from the writings of Hæccko, he thinks Biorn de Skardza compiled his *Annales, sive Collectanea de Grœnlandia*, deduced from the 1400 to his own time, a MS. copy of which he often quotes (11). He also mentions another Icelandic writer, whom he calls an author of undoubted credit on this subject, Ivar Beer (12).

I had almost forgot to observe, that Hans Egede says, that, though he searched with care for Forbisher's streights, he could not find them.

We find, in the ancient Danish chronicles, and also in Arngnim Jonas, that, in the year 1256, the inhabitants of Greenland revolted from Magnus King of Norway, but he again subdued them by the help of the Danes, and, peace being concluded in 1261, three of the principal inhabitants of Greenland signed it, "declarantes (says Jonas) suis factum auspiciis, ut Groenlandi perpetuum tributum Norvego denuo juraissent."

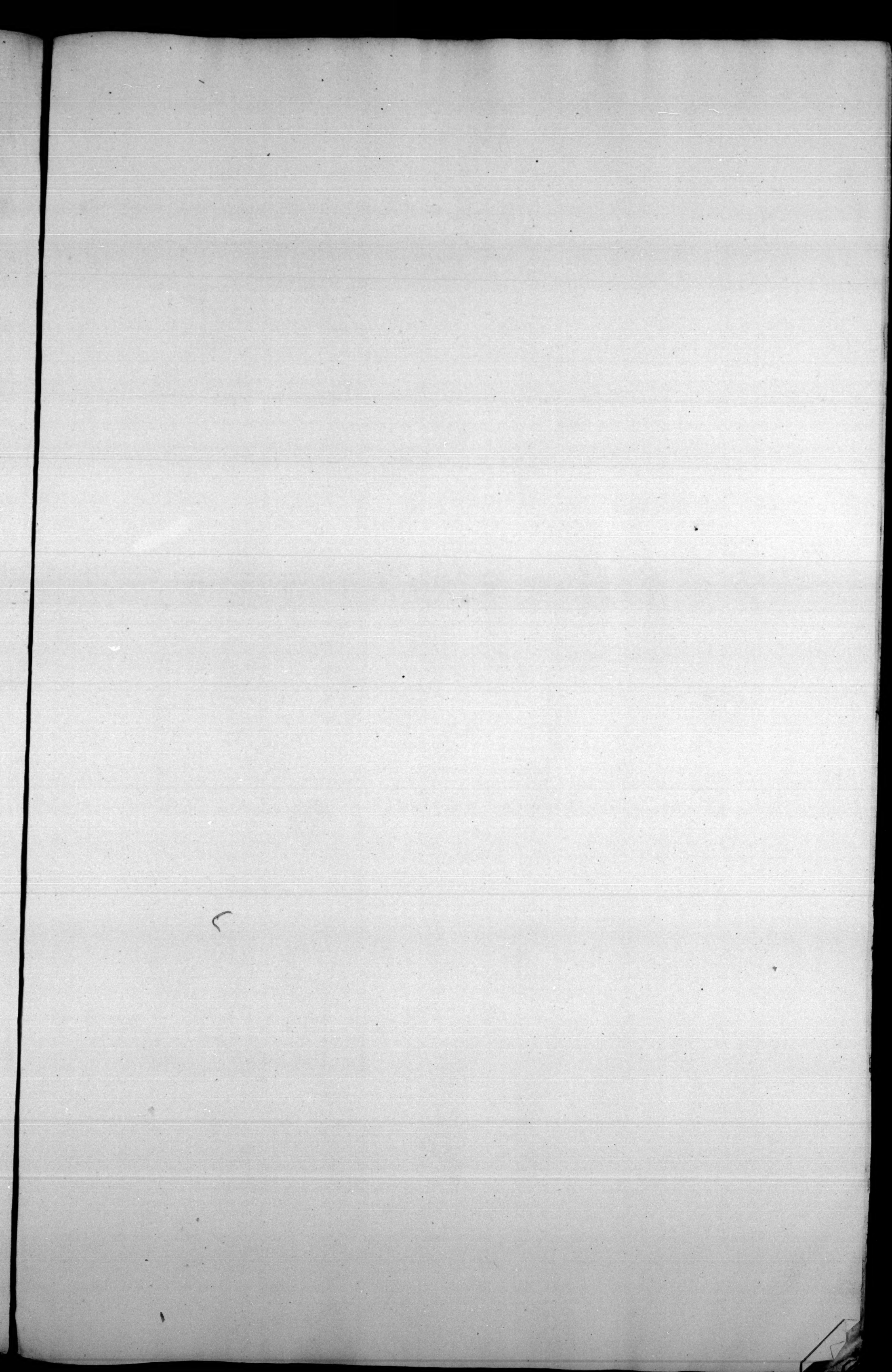
Our readers will find in Torfæus's account of Greenland, besides a history of its first discovery, the manners of its inhabitants, their food and cloathing, and a number of other curious particulars, a catalogue of the bishops of this country, and five charts of it, the first drawn by Gudbrand Thorlack, Bishop of Hølen, anno 1606, another by Sigurd Stephanius, anno 1570, the third by Jonas Gydmund of Iceland, anno 1668, a fourth by Theodore Thorlack, and the fifth drawn by himself from the most ancient monuments he had access to see (13).

Torfæus says (14), that he had in his library a MS. copy of Biorn de Skardza's work, entitled *Annales, sive Collectanea de Grœnlandia*, compiled by that antiquary from the *Origines Islandie* by Hauk, one of the supreme judges of Iceland.

Since Egede published his short account of Greenland, another much more exact and extensive was written by David Crantz (15), one of the Moravian missionaries sent into that country by the *Unitas Fratrum* or *Hernhutters*, who have kept up a succession of preachers among these wild people for more than thirty years past. Crantz tells us, he left that country anno 1762, so that his account is the latest and best we have, both of the natural history of Greenland, and also of the genius and manners of its inhabitants. The second volume of his work is employed in giving a history of the labours of the disciples of Count Zinzendorf in that country, in which we are more tempted to admire the invincible patience of the *Hernhut* missionaries, than to credit them for the wonderful effects (they tell us) their preaching produced among savages, who, according to Crantz's own account, are not of very acute understandings, or a very docile disposition.

Crantz agrees with Egede and others, in questioning whether any such streights as those called Forbisher's ever did exist, and thinks, if that navigator found any such, they are now entirely stopped up by those masses of ice, which float in most amazing quantities along this desert coast (16); and, when they settle and obstruct the mouth of any bay, they are called the *Eis-Blink* or shining ice, which, forming a crust of vast thickness over the bay, leaves a large aperture, through which the loose floating ice from the interior parts of the bay finds a passage into the ocean. The cause and manner of the formation of the *Eis-blink*, and its tremendous appearance, the reader will find in the first volume of Crantz's narrative (17).

(1) Egede's History of Greenland, p. 22. (2) Vid. Thormod. Torf. Hist. Greenland. (3) Account of Greenland, p. 18. (4) Printed 1608, 8vo. (5) Printed 1688, 4to. (6) Vid. Sibb. Bibl. Dan. p. 151. (7) Tom. I. p. 68. seq. (8) Published Hafnia 1708, 8vo. (9) Bibl. ubi supra. (10) In Serie Reg. Dan. p. 5. (11) Vid. Hist. Grœn. p. 18. et Ser. Reg. p. 493. (12) Preface, p. 22. (13) Vid. Sibb. Bibl. Dan. p. 152. seq. (14) Groenland. Ant. p. 39. & 44. (15) It was translated from the German, and printed at London 1767, 2 vols, 8vo. (16) Crantz, vol. I. p. 19. seq. (17) P. 15. et seq.



G.

GREENLAND. As to what remains, Crantz tells the same story of the discovery of Greenland by Eric Redhead we have already given, and fixes it to the year 982. Lyschander supposes the first discovery to have happened anno 770, and cites a bull of Pope Gregory IV. in which the conversion of the Icelanders and Greenlanders is committed to Ansgar, first apostle of the North, who had been appointed Bishop of Hamburg by the Emperor Lewis the Pious (18); but as this contradicts the narrative of Snorro Sturluson, Arngrim Jonas, and the whole stream of Icelandic history, it appears best to follow rather those ancient than the modern authorities (19).

It may to some appear strange, that the first discoverer **GREENLAND.** Eric should have called this country *Greenland*; but it is probable that he gave it this appellation in order to encourage his countrymen to come and settle there (20). Neither was this appellation given it altogether without foundation; for, though the inner parts of Greenland are nothing but a collection of mountains perpetually covered with ice and snow, yet upon the sea coasts and in the bays and inlets are found very good meadows and pasturage, or at least what would be deemed such by natives of Iceland and Norway (21).

(18) Crantz, vol. II. p. 244. (19) Vide Mallet's North. Ant. vol. I. p. 273. (20) Vid. Arii Polyhist. de Islandia, cap. 6. p. 33.
(21) Egede Nat. Hist. Greenland, p. 4. 12. 44.

H.

HOEL.

HOEL, surnamed *the Good*, King of Wales, was the son of Caddel, whom he succeeded in the principality of South Wales, and it was while he reigned over this part of the country that he published that body of laws which have rendered his name so famous ever since. It was not till after the death of Edwal *the Bald*, which happened about the year 940, that he succeeded to his relation, and became sovereign of all Wales; when his new subjects gladly received his code of laws, of which it would appear they stood in great need. In the preface to his body of laws, we are told the method in which they were compiled. He there tells us, that every *commota* or lesser district in his dominions sent six men, amongst whom were some archbishops, bishops, abbots, and learned doctors, many of whom had the rod borne before them, as a mark of their dignity, by the officer we now call a verger. From the laymen were chosen twelve of the most knowing, and to them was added an *Ysgolhaig* or learned man, who appears to have acted as their clerk. We are told, that the person's name, who officiated upon this occasion, was Blegoryd, Archdeacon of Llandaff, and it is probable, that these *Ysgolhaigios* or schoolastici were generally clergymen, whose education and course of study had fitted them for this office. Having gathered these men together at a place now called *White-land*, situated upon the river Taff, he gave them in charge to frame a body of good laws, to abrogate the bad ones that had formerly been in use, or change and amend whatever was faulty in them. This good Prince informs us (1), that they began this work with solemn prayer and fasting, and, when it was ended, they imprecated the curse of God, of that whole assembly, and of all the Welch able to bear arms, upon any who should attempt to violate or change any part of those constitutions, without the consent of a national assembly as numerous as that in which they were first enacted (2). Under this anathema were included all those who should dare to take upon them the office of a judge, without being thoroughly instructed in the three columns of those laws, that is, the constitutions that relate to murder, theft, and wilful fire-raising. We learn from this passage, that, in those turbulent times, none were thought to have any concern in the public affairs of the nation, nor a right to give their voices in the general assembly, who were not able to defend the state with their sword. Another observation, equally obvious, is, that, before the age of King Hoel, they had few or no written laws; for, in the place just quoted, the clerk Blegoryd is mentioned as one thoroughly well acquainted with the traditions and unwritten customs of his country, as well as of those that were reduced to writing. And, indeed, it would appear, that the ancient laws of the Welch had been exceedingly bad when they so gladly received the constitutions of King Hoel, which every where point out to us the most disorderly state of society, and a barbarity of manners similar to those of the ancient Longobards, Burgundians, and other barbarous nations, whose laws have been collected by Lindenbrogius. In the laws of good King Hoel, almost every crime is to be com-

pensated in money, even the death of the King, or adultery committed with the Queen (3). The Prince is obliged to become servant to his own fowler, and to hold his stirrup while he mounts, on the day in which he happened to catch a hawk of a particular kind (4). Revenge and a sanguinary disposition is every where encouraged, inasmuch that, though a fine is imposed upon any who shall slay, on seeing a dead body (5), Who killed this man? yet he who has revenged the death of any of his relations by assassinating the homicide, is called to the maternal succession, without observing the legal forms used on such occasions. The words of the law are: "Is ad successionem sine mora cum cognatis suis vocabitur, post habita temporum solemnitate quibus causae hereditariae cognoscende sunt (6)."

We find the learned Wotton, who has given us an excellent edition of Hoel's laws, accompanied with a glossary and notes (7), is clearly of opinion, that, though before King Hoel's age the ancient Welch had magistrates and courts of justice, yet the power of the Prince was unlimited, nor were the rights of the subject defined or secured by any code of written laws (8). Hence the sad complaints of Gildas (9), and the venerable Bede (10), that justice was banished from the land, and the foundations of equity totally overturned. Hence appears the falsehood of the story we have from Geoffrey of Monmouth (11), and the other ignorant monks who have copied him (12), that, long before the invasion of Julius Caesar, the ancient Britons were uniformly governed by a body of written laws, enacted by a king called *Dunwallo*, and which remained in force till the days of Hoel the Good. That a parcel of monks should publish lies is neither new nor strange, but that such men as Leland (13), and the others we have quoted below, should be so very much imposed upon in a matter of this kind, justly excites our wonder. To support their opinion, they quote a passage we find in the MSS. of King Hoel's laws (14), in which we are told, that this *Dunwallo* governed all Britain, and was the first legislator in this island; that King Hoel indeed abrogated or changed most of *Dunwallo's* laws, though he retained those relating to the mensuration of ground. Now, not to mention the arguments by which Wotton has combatted this monkish figment (15), we need only look to the chapter itself to be convinced that it is a late interpolation. We are here told, that King *Dunwallo* caused measure the whole island from a promontary in Caledonia, called *Blathon* in this passage, to another called *Penguaid* in Cornwall, and found the whole length of the island to be 900 miles, and its breadth 500; that he constructed his measures from the length of a grain of barley, allowing three grains to an inch, three inches to a palm, three palms to a foot, three of these paces formed a leap, and three leaps that portion of land called by the Welch *Groan*, i. e. a fow, and a thousand of these made a mile. Of such frivolous paragraphs is this chapter composed, and the reasons for rejecting it the reader will find at length in the preface of the edition we have quoted all along.

HOEL.

(1) Pref. 1. (2) Pref. 2. (3) Leges Wal. lib. 1. cap. 4. adde lib. 3. cap. 3. et alibi. (4) Vid. lib. 4. p. 351. (5) Ibid. p. 350. (6) Ibid. lib. 4. p. 352. (7) London 1730, folio. (8) Powel Not. in Hist. Prin. Cambriae, p. 20. (9) Sect. 18. et 26. (10) Edit. Cant. 1721, p. 58. (11) Lib. 2. cap. 17. (12) Vid. Higden, p. 202. edit. Gale. (13) De Script. Brit. in Dunwallone, et alibi. Bale, cent. 1. cap. 14. Pitt's Descript. Ang. p. 65. Rowland Mona Antiq. p. 175. (14) Lib. 2. cap. 19. (15) Wotton in notis, p. 155.

H.

HALMAR. **H**IALMAR, King of Biarmaland, which is thought to be that tract of country known at present by the names of Medelpadia and Angermannia, &c. Others suppose it to lie to the east of the gulph of Bothnia (1). Be this as it will, Hialmar, we are told, was the son of Harec. The history of this noted warrior, wrote by an anonymous author, who calls himself the son of Rodar, tells us (2), that he lived in Vynland or Greenland, and appears to have been a Pagan. I have a very curious copy of this fragment (for such it is), in the original Runic language and character, with two Latin versions by John Peringskiöld, in folio. It was printed also in the *Centuria Canticorum Danorum Priori* (3). Northern critics think it written by some ancient Scald about the year 900. In the poem, Hialmar is said to have been slain in battle by Grymr or Grymer, but the Runic fragment does not mention this. It calls him King of Biarmaland and Thulemark, and says, that, by the assistance of his companion Hramur, he killed Vagnar, King of Biarmaland, and conquered his country; that he married Vagnar's daughter, and had by her a son called Throme, and a daughter called Heidil. She was carried off by a warrior called Urk; but the father prayed to Freia, who caused his daughter be restored to him, and then he married her to Hramur, constituting him Jarl (Earl) of the islands of Thulemark. He also gave him a magical drum, such as the Laplanders still use. Hialmar also gave another nobleman, called Ulpho, a golden horn, which had the images of Thor, Odin, and Freia on it. In this fragment are many vestiges and proofs of the ancient manners of the Scandinavians, their use of enchantments, magic, Runic characters, &c. the sacrifice of a fatted horse,

and other rites of Paganism. Mention is also made of the idol Juma (4). In the end of the fragment, it is said, that the priests, who used to sacrifice in Sigtouna, the ancient capital of Sweden, were driven thence, and took refuge in Vynland, the name given to the west coast of Greenland by the Norwegians, who first sailed thither from Iceland, under the conduct of Eric (5).

It would appear, that Mallet had seen a copy of the history of Hialmar very different from the Runic edition published by Peringskiöld, and which I have followed all along in this article. Mallet calls this history a poem, whereas the Runic copy now before me is in prose. The language of the edition used by Mallet, he tells us, appears to be of the thirteenth or fourteenth century (6), which is no improbable conjecture; and, if we may hazard another, we should imagine, that some bard of the fourteenth century had verified the ancient Runic history of Hialmar so happily as to render it a favourite over all the north; for Biornier informs us (7), that he himself had heard it sung in his youth, with some slight alterations, by the peasants inhabiting the provinces which lie to the north of Stockholm. Though Mr Mallet seems not to believe, that the heroes mentioned in this history lived so far back as the third century, we think that, had he seen the Runic edition we have mentioned, the antiquity of the characters, and the purity of the diction, together with the Pagan manners and customs every where alluded to, would have convinced him, that, as the history itself must have been written long before the introduction of Christianity into the North, there is no difficulty in supposing that the heroes celebrated in it lived in the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century (8).

(1) Mallet North. Ant. vol. II. p. 250. (2) In fine Hist. (3) Numb. 20. edit. ab Andrao Valleio, 1695, adde monumenta Hist. Sept. vulgo Nordiska Kampedater, 1737. (4) Vide art. *Juma*, infra. (5) Vide his article. (6) Mallet, vol. II. p. 247. (7) Apud Mallet, ubi supra. (8) Vide Wormii Lit. Run. p. 153.

S.

SNORRO. **S**NORRO, called generally *Sturlason*, i. e. the son of Sturla, is the best and most authentic writer among the ancient historians of Iceland. He was a native of that country, and born about the beginning of the thirteenth century (1). His father was Sturla, son of Thordar, and his mother was Gudni, daughter of Baudvar. He derives his descent from Frode the Pacific, who reigned in Denmark at the time of our Saviour's appearance. He was educated in every kind of learning by Jon, pastor of the church of Odda, in the southern district of Iceland, and left his native country, when about twenty, to gather materials for the history he then began to think of. He was received with great distinction and regard by the Princes of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, both on account of his learning, and also as being the best poet of his age, an accomplishment highly valued in that time. His prudence also made him be much employed in state affairs, both by the King of Sweden, and by Haco the Old, King of Norway, by whom he was sent to Iceland to reconcile the minds of the people, who were at that time ready to revolt from Haco. Returning home, he carried with him all the MSS. and collections of the ancient poets he had made in his many journeys through the North, out of which he composed his history, which is certainly the most authentic of any we have of these northern regions, as no writer could be better informed than Snorro was, both by his learning, and the access he had to the sources of history. We have of his a history of the Norwegian Kings, from Odin to Swerrir, in the old Icelandic tongue, compiled from the ancient poems and traditions. This work was translated into Danish by Petrus Claudii, and published at Copenhagen (2). In this history Snorro has not only given a particular account of the lives of all these Princes, but also noted the places where they were interred, most of which are called by their names to this day. He enumerates ten Swedish judges, called anciently *Drott*, eighteen Kings of Sweden, and six little Princes of Norway. Most of the MSS. of Snorro's history end with the life of Magnus the son of Erling, the twenty-fourth Prince (3), but some of the best versions continue it to Haquin, the twenty-ninth King of Norway, in the twenty-

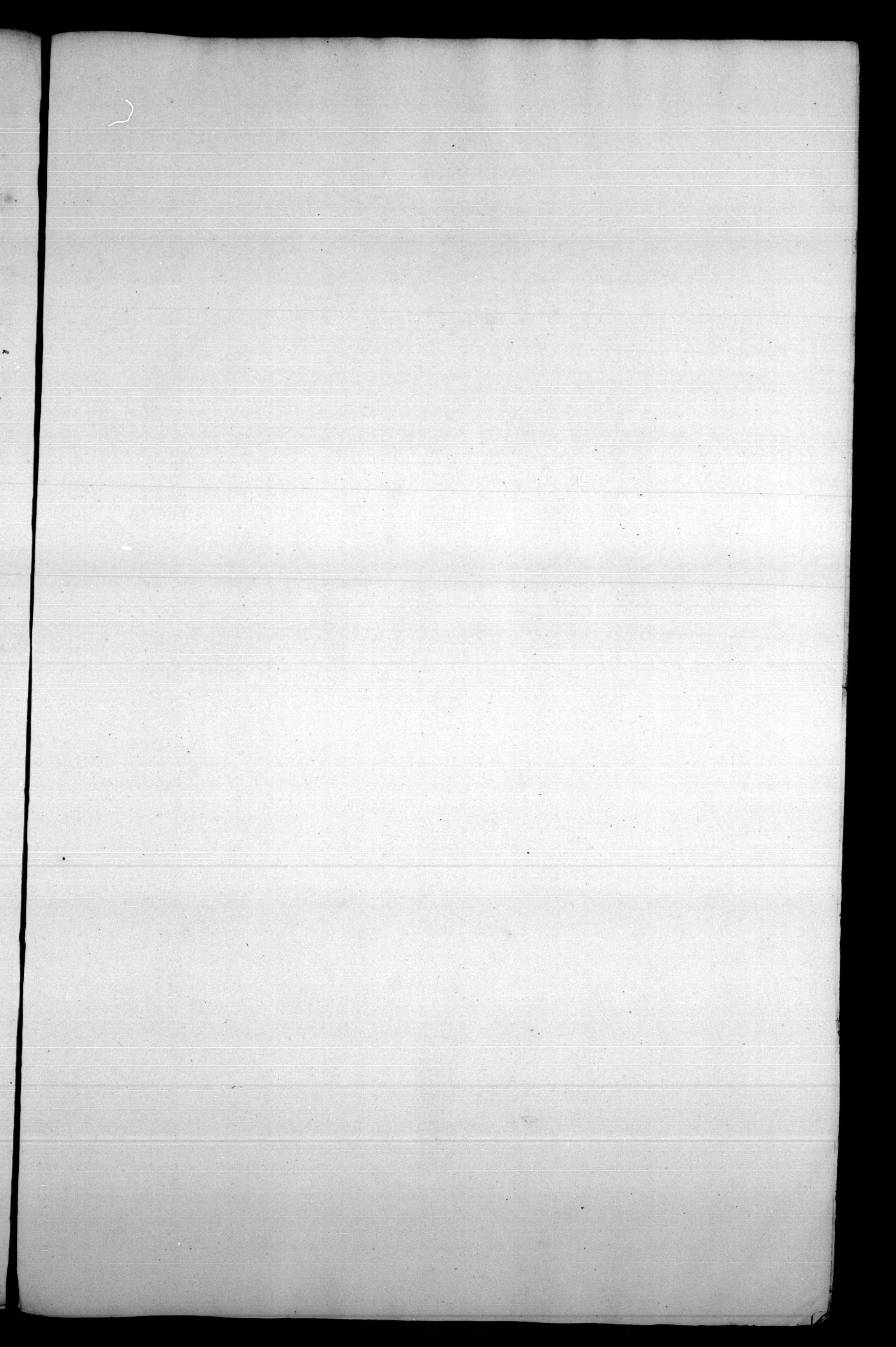
fifth year of whose reign Snorro died. The best edition of this history is that published by John Peringskiöld (4), in which we have the page divided into two columns, the first containing the original text in Gothic characters, the other the Swedish version; at the foot of the page there is a Latin version by the editor. Christianus Jacobi published an epitome of Snorro's work (5). The famous Wormius published an edition of the Danish version of Petrus Claudii (6). In the preface, Wormius hath shewn, at great length, how much more rational it is to trust to the accounts of the natives of the northern regions themselves, than to the obscure and short hints of the Roman and German writers, as to what relates to the history and antiquities of these countries. He adds, that it is very easy to see the truth of these stories, which the ancient bards, by poetical fiction, delivered sometimes in an obscure manner, e. g. as when they call the ancient heroes *Ramper* or giants, which denotes no more than that they were men of great strength, and *Trol-dend*, or *Biergtrollden*, mountain magicians, because they generally inhabited strong holds situated among mountains and inaccessible places, whence they are often called bears, wolves, and dragons. To this edition Wormius has added, 1. A genealogy of the ancient Kings of Norway, from Harold Harfagre to the last Olaus. 2. A chronology, taken from the ancient annals of Iceland, from the year 849, in which Harold Harfagre was born, down to the year 1025. 3. Notes on the history of Dale Gulbrand. 4. *Scaldatal*, or a catalogue of the principal Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian poets, who have transmitted to posterity the histories of the several princes.

To this Snorro is commonly ascribed the Edda, or ancient mythology of the Northern Pagans, which he is thought to have compiled, in seventy-eight fables or chapters, from the more ancient one collected by Sæmund Frode (7). Scheffer, in *Suecia Literata*, mentions another work of Snorro's, called *Hliods Grein*, or the *Ars Poetica* of the ancient Scalds, which perhaps is the same with the *Ars Poetica* subjoined to the Edda.

Observe, that, in Wormius' edition of Claudius' epitome of Snorro's history, the verses of the poets cited by Snorro are

(1) Anno 1179. (2) Anno 1633, 4to. Vid. Moller. ad Bartol. Ant. Dan. p. 404. Sibb. Bibl. Dan. cap. 5. p. 126. et seq. (3) Anno 1177. (4) In folio, anno 1697. (5) Anno 1712. (6) Anno 1633, 4to. (7) Vid. Moller. Hypom. p. 405, et seq. Bartol. Ant. Dan. p. 193. adde art. *Edda*.

omitted.



S.

SNORRO. omitted. Nothing could be worse judged, for on these (as being written by poets who either were present at, or lived soon after the events they relate) the authenticity of Snorro's account chiefly depends. This did not escape Snorro's observation, and therefore he quotes the works of the ancient Scalds always in their original versification. It had been much better for Northern History if Saxo had done the same, instead of giving us loose translations of fragments of the ancient poets in Latin verse, by which we are deprived of every mean of judging of their authenticity, and must take all on the faith of a writer who has been proved to have fallen into gross errors, both in his history and chronology (8).

A writer, whose lucubrations appeared the other day under the specious title of the History of the Northern Governments (9), asserts, that he had got much information from the commentary of Torfæus upon the history of Snorro. Unfortunately I have never been able to meet with this commentary of Torfæus, and as this learned author makes no mention of it in any of his printed works, nor is the least notice of it to be met with in the account of the Danish writers by Bartolinus, nor in Sibbern's Bibliotheca Danica, I am tempted to believe, that the ingenious J. Williams, Esq; has found this commentary in the Prikawse of Moscow, while he consulted those precious records of the Russian empire, from whence he details a history, containing nothing better than what we might have expected from a common newspaper. His total ignorance of the ancient history, and even of the very names of the writers who have delivered down to us the annals of those nations, sufficiently proves, that, in compiling this rude and undigested

mass, he had never given himself the trouble to consult any of them, but had contented himself with motley quotations at second hand, and such scraps as he could pick out of the writers of yesterday.

We should not have detained our readers so long with so trivial a digression, had we not thought it our duty to put them on their guard against the artifices of those called Book-makers, who, to earn a paltry subsistence, do not hesitate to write upon any subject their bookseller may direct them to, though utterly devoid of all knowledge relating to it.

After Snorro had been a good time supreme judge of Iceland, upon some unpopular act of his (as it would seem), Gissur Thordwaldson attacked his house at Reikiahult in the night, with seventy soldiers, and having broke open the doors, Snorro endeavoured to escape into a subterraneous apartment, but two of Gissur's soldiers followed him thither, and murdered him in the sixty-second year of his age. We have extracted most of these particulars from Peringskiöld's preface to his edition of Snorro's history, who cites the ancient writers for his authority, such as the Landnama, the Iceland annals, the history of Haco the Elder, and others.

Snorro's work is generally cited by the Northern writers, under the name of *Kringla Heimsins*, or the Circuit of the World, these being the two first words of his chronicle. In the same manner, the Rabbis generally quote the five books of Moses, not by the names we now give them, which are formed from the Greek, but by the original Hebrew initial of each book.

(8) Vid. Torf. Ser. Reg. Dan. passim. (9) Printed Lond. 1778, 2 vols, 4to.

SWITHIOD. SWITHIOD, the ancient name of Sweden, which, it is probable, was derived from *Swidrir*, the name of Odin in his own country, before he left Scythia to settle in Scandinavia. Thus Swithiod will signify the people of *Swidrir*; and this is Snorro's account of the name, which appears better founded than the other etymologies mentioned by Torfæus (1), for *Thiod* in the ancient Norse signifies people; and thus the English in the reign of Egbert were

called *Englathiod*; and Snorro generally uses the word SWITHIOD. *Thiodir* for people or nation. Perhaps the name Sweden may come from *Swidiulend*, the name given to fields where forests were burnt, and the ground cleared for ploughing, as it was in this manner that the greater part of Sweden was first cultivated. The Swedes, in their native tongue, call themselves *Swea*, *Swanska*, and *Swenskir*.

(1) Hist. Nor. lib. 1. cap. 7.



SPECIMEN

OF THE

BIBLIOTHECA SEPTENTRIONALIS.

MDCCLXXVIII.

